

## Fence Cow Work Judging Criteria

“The most important point when working a cow is for the horse to have the advantage or be in control of the cow. At the same time, the horse should exhibit a smooth willingness to do his job. He should respond to a light rein and show good manners in his face and body.” – Bobby Ingersoll.

- Judging begins when the contestant enters the arena.
- There shall be no schooling between the completion of the rein work and cow work, when the cow work immediately follows the rein work; the penalty for this will be a zero.

### Pattern:

- The required pattern for the cow work is: boxing, fence turns and circles, in that order.

### Boxing:

- At the start of the work, each contestant, upon receiving a cow in the arena, shall hold that cow on the prescribed end of the arena for a sufficient time to demonstrate the ability of the horse to contain the cow at that end.
- The horse should exhibit superior cow sense and natural cow working ability without excessive reining or spurring. In the head-to-head working position, the degree of difficulty shall be considered.

### Turning:

- After a reasonable amount of time, the contestant shall take the cow down the fence, making at least one turn each way on the fence. The contestant must get a minimum of one turn in each direction when attempting the fence work.
- To qualify as a turn, the exhibitor must be in position to control the animal and be the cause of the animal to change course.
- During the turn, the horse should use himself in a controlled athletic manner, using its hocks to stop and drive out of the turn, while using its front end to balance and turn. More than two good turns in each direction should not result in extra credit but also should not be penalized unless the cow is thereby too exhausted to circle correctly. One turn each way may not necessarily result in extra credit if the horse and/or cow are out of control.

### Types of Turns

#### A. Fence Turn:

- A turn in which the cow, while being run down the fence on one side of the arena is turned in a different direction and held near the same fence while being run in the new direction.
- The exhibitor must be close enough to the cow to be the cause of the turn. The situation where a horse and rider attempt to turn the cow and the cow exits the turn behind the horse is also considered to have satisfied the fence turn requirement. The route of the cow being worked has been altered because of the influence of the horse and rider.

#### B. Open Field Turn:

- A turn in which the cow, while being run down the arena more than 20 feet away from the perimeter fence is turned in a different direction and held on the same side of the arena, while being run in the new direction.
- The exhibitor must be close enough to the cow to be the cause of the turn.

#### C. Circling Turn:

- A turn in which the horse, while attempting an open field turn does not use its hocks to stop and drive out of the turn, but instead continues forward motion and guides or ‘circles’ the cow into the new direction.
- If an exhibitor performs a circling turn as the second turn of a two (2) turn run, then they must show separation between the second turn and the first circle.

- To avoid a 2C penalty, they must then change sides on the cow after completing the circling turn and before beginning the first circle.

### **Circling:**

- Then the contestant shall take the cow to an open part of the arena and maneuver the cow smoothly at least 360 degrees in each direction without interference from the fence.
- The circle's size, symmetry, speed and relative balance from right and left show control. Tightening the circles down with fast head-to-head speed will be a credit situation. The circles should be completed before the cow is exhausted.

### **Run Content:**

- The judge should take into consideration the size of the arena, condition of the ground and disposition of the cattle in scoring each work. If ground, arena and/or weather conditions are deemed unfavorable by the show management, they may inform the judge and decide to alter the required cattle work for safety reasons.
- The greater the difficulty of the run, the more credit should be given. The difficulty may be due to the extreme speed or stubbornness of the cow, or the cow's reluctance to move down the fence when sufficiently driven by the contestant.
- The most controlled cow work, with the highest degree of difficulty, that exhibits good form throughout, should be marked the highest.
- Bad manners exhibited by the horse will be penalized under run content.
- In the cow work phase of any class one hand on the horn may be used to prevent the fall of the rider. Holding the horn excessively may be penalized under run content.

### **New Cow:**

- When enough cows are available, the contestant should receive a new cow if the cow drawn is unreasonably difficult or unworkable. The judge will indicate new cow by blowing his/her whistle twice – indicating the awarding of a new cow.
- Allowing the horse to quit working before the judge signals for a new cow will result in a zero score. If the judge awards a new cow, the exhibitor has the option to refuse the new cow by continuing to work.
- If the exhibitor intends to accept the new cow, he or she must initiate the pull up immediately: instantly, at once, without delay.
- If the exhibitor is using a bridle or two-rein setup, he/she must not use two hands at any time; either when pulling up from the cow being worked, or while waiting for the new cow.
- From the time the exhibitor enters the arena until the final whistle, signifying the work is complete, the pair are being judged.
- If two hands are used on the bridle reins at any time, a score of zero will be applied. With a multiple judge system, any one of the judges may terminate the work or signal for a new cow.
- In the case of an emergency (Such as a person falling into the arena or part of the arena falling apart) the judge may blow two whistles for a second time. At this point, the contestant has no option to continue and must receive a new cow. Contestant must pull up immediately or a score of zero will be given.
- During the cow work, when a cow leaves the working area, it is automatic that the contestant will receive a new cow and scoring will begin again with the new cow, unless the contestant has been awarded a new cow and opted to continue working the current cow.
- Once a rider has committed to circling a cow, if the cow falls down no new cow will be awarded. The rider should complete the run by riding around the fallen cow to fulfill circling requirements.
- In the case that a rider is awarded a third cow, the rider will have the option to work their new cow or to rest their horse and work their new cow at the end of the next set. If the rider is in the last set of the class, they shall be afforded up to 20 minutes for their horse to recover before working the third cow. If the rider elects to leave

the show arena, the horse must stay in the warm-up area adjacent to the show arena. If the horse leaves the warm-up area or works a cow, the run will result in a 0 score.

### **Terminating the Work:**

- The judge may blow his/her whistle once at any time during the work to terminate it.
- If at any time a judge feels that the contestant is out of control endangering themselves and/or their horse, the judge may terminate the work, and a score of zero will be given.
- Judging ends when the whistle blows. A score of zero will be given if the work is not complete at that point.

### **Cow Work - Penalty Points:**

#### **1 point penalties:**

- Loss of working advantage
- When the cow's head breaks the plane of the 1 point marker.
- Changing sides of arena to turn cow. (1 point each time)
- For each length horse runs past cow. A length by is 1 horse length of daylight between the cow's head and the top of the horse's tail.
- Working Out of position
- Slipping a rein
- Failure to drive cow past middle marker on first run down the fence before initiating the turn.
- Excessive hollering.

#### **2 point penalties:**

- Going around the corner of the arena before turning the cow. (When the cow's head breaks the plane of the 2 point penalty marker)
- When working an animal in the open field (at least 20' from the side of arena) and the animal gets within 3 feet from the end fence before being turned. This applies when going from one end of the arena to the other.
- Circling Turn – This penalty applies only in a two (2) turn run in which the second turn is an attempted open field turn where the horse never achieves a stopping position between the 2nd turn and the first circle; in the situation where it is not possible to tell where the second turn ends and the first circle begins.

#### **3 point penalties:**

- Dangerous Position
- Exhausting or overworking the cow before circling.
- Hanging up on the fence (refusing to turn). When attempting to turn a cow on the fence a horse is considered to be hung up when the animal being worked exits the turn and the horse momentarily refuses the riders command and freezes up (stops lateral movement of the shoulders). Also considered a hang-up is when a horse is put in a position where it is physically impossible to complete the turn and the lateral movement of his shoulders is stopped.
- Knocking down the cow without having a working advantage

#### **5 point penalties:**

- Not getting one turn each way (5 points each way)
- Spurring or hitting in front of cinch at any time or excessively whipping or spurring the horse.
- Blatant disobedience, defined as kicking, biting, bucking, rearing, striking, or obviously insubordinate

#### **-0- score:**

- Turn tail
- Using 2 hands on the reins in a bridle or two rein class
- Fingers between the reins in a bridle class
- Balking

- Extremely out of control (Any horse that is out of control while working the cow, thus endangering the rider, i.e. crossing the path of the cow, shall be called off the cow.)
- Bloody Mouth (inside)
- Illegal Equipment
- Leaving the work area before the pattern or work is complete
- Fall of horse or rider
- Schooling of the horse between the rein and cow work when the cow work immediately follows rein work
- Schooling of the horse between cows, if a new cow is awarded. Schooling is defined as gaining an advantage by excessive pulling, turning, stopping or backing or failure to immediately pull up when a new cow is accepted.
- If a rider hits or kicks the animal being worked, with the romal or reins, in an abusive manner
- Improper Western Attire
- Failure to work in the proper working order.

**N-E**

- Failure of an exhibitor to attempt to complete the work.

**No Score**

- Abuse
- Lameness of the horse